

Message from Supervisor McKay

Last October, in a Washington Post editorial we read that “Even after three years of budget cuts and plummeting revenue, Fairfax County remains the economic wunderkind of Virginia and in many ways of the Washington area ... It is poised for further growth and prosperity even as neighboring jurisdictions scramble to retrench and regroup.” The County Executive’s recently released budget reflects that and sets the stage for discussion on how—and how much—we fund the services that the County provides. We’ve been through some tough years and through careful management we’ve kept steady our support for our school system, public safety, zoning enforcement, and human services while holding the line on property taxes. However, by law, we must have a balanced budget and so something had to give somewhere. That something was parks and libraries—both of which have sustained large cuts over the past several years. I am hopeful that as the economy continues to improve we’ll be able to restore some funding to parks and libraries—key elements of our County’s quality of life.

The County Executive’s proposed budget recommends a one cent increase in the stormwater fee each homeowner pays in order to meet federal and state requirements for clean water and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. (The current rate is one and a half cents.) The County Board has advertised a real estate rate of \$1.08 per \$100 of assessed value even though the County Executive recommended \$1.09. This means that while the final rate may be lower, it may not be any higher. This is not the final budget. My colleagues on the Board and I will do an in depth review and listen carefully to our residents’ priorities before adopting the final budget on May 1. I’ll also be listening to the recommendations of my Lee District citizen budget advisory group—now in its third year. (You can read the group’s FY2012 report on my website at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/lee/>.)

There’s more budget information at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/>; the Lee District budget town meeting is on March 28 at 7:30 pm in the community room of the Franconia Governmental Center. To testify at a budget public hearing, contact the Clerk to the Board at 703-324-3151 to put your name on the speakers list. You can also sign up online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bosclerk/speaker_bos.htm. Public hearings will be on April 10, 11, and 12 at the Fairfax County Government Center.

Our citizens have high expectations for their local government. Please let me know what is important to you by calling my office at 703-971-6262 or sending an email to Leedist@fairfaxcounty.gov.